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SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIALS STICK TO NAM, UNSC BUSINESS DURING TRIP TO IRAN

¶1. (SBU) Summary: According to an MFA official who was part of a three-person GVN delegation to the recent NAM meeting on human rights held in Tehran, the Vietnamese delegation focused on the NAM event. On the margins, the delegation also lobbied with other attendees on behalf of Vietnam's UN Security Council candidacy. The GVN officials did not meet bilaterally with Iranian counterparts during the two-day visit. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Deputy Foreign Minister Le Van Bang, whose portfolio includes international organizations and human rights issues, led the GVN delegation to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Ministerial Meeting on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity held in Tehran on September 3-4. Accompanying DFM Bang were MFA IO Department Deputy Director Dzuong Chi Dzung and IO Department Human Rights Section Expert Dang Tran Nam Trung. According to Trung, the GVN delegation's contribution to the meeting consisted of an intervention by DFM Bang that stressed the importance of dialogue based on mutual respect as countries seek to narrow differences in the area of human rights. He cited Vietnam's human rights dialogues with the United States, EU, Norway and Switzerland as examples of this approach.

¶3. (SBU) DFM Bang's schedule while attending the NAM meeting did not include bilateral meetings with Iranian officials. Apart from the plenary sessions, Trung said DFM Bang's only formal bilateral meeting was with the Cuban Foreign Minister, due to Cuba's role as the current head of the NAM. On the margins of the human rights meeting, DFM Bang met with other heads of delegation to garner support for Vietnam's UN Security Council candidature. Trung suggested that the meeting was a "unique opportunity" with more than 90 countries represented, many at the ministerial level, and DFM Bang spent "a lot of time lobbying." Feedback was positive, with appreciation for Vietnam's current role in the international arena and likely future contributions at the UN, noted Trung.

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